Draft Instructions and Guide to the British Logbook Directory

This document will be subject to amendment and modification as the Directory progresses. These instructions are intended to be a periodically revised draft of the general guide to the Logbook Directory. The guide is particularly concerned with demonstrating both the potential and the limitations of the information in the directory and the various ways in which it can be used for the selection of ships' logbooks for research. The final design of both the directory and the guide will be determined by the anticipated requirements of the CDMP programme and the likely needs of future researchers. After some general remarks on the nature and use of the directory entries, each field will be explained in detail. The final section suggests way in which the Directory can be used to identify the best material.

GENERAL NOTES

Format of the Directory

The data for the directory has been entered on to Excel spreadsheets. The data is easily transferable to other spreadsheet programmes, into text, or into a database such as Microsoft Access. It is recommended that the directory be available in a number of formats including a searchable database. The ability to search and link different entries will greatly enhance the use of the directory as a tool for selecting logbooks for possible imaging.

The data within the logbook directory must necessarily revolve around the ship itself, as this is the basis on which the various archives organize their holdings of logbooks. However the needs of researchers generally, and the digitisation programme in particular, demands a more sophisticated approach. The directory has therefore been organized (as far as possible) by voyage, while at the same time keeping the vessel itself as a focus. It will therefore be possible, for example, to quickly identify a voyage across the Atlantic from the UK to the West Indies at a particular time of year and by a particular type of vessel. It will also be possible to identify those vessels making long, multi-ocean voyages with their attendant long runs of data. It will be simple to choose between vessels sailing in the tropics or at much higher latitudes.

The Excel form of the directory has been divided into four distinct geographic regions, and two additional dedicated ship lists, each with a separate spreadsheet. These regions have also been allocated a number, in order to provide a field for the database where it will be possible to search a specific region. The regions have been selected and defined according to the typical movements and operating areas of Royal

Navy and East India Company vessels. They have been selected to minimize movements of vessels from one region to another. A logbook can therefore be chosen on the basis of its geographic coverage with some confidence that the vessel will remain in that general region until its return to the UK. The user of the directory should always be aware that there will be inevitable exceptions and that a vessel may for instance be ordered from the Mediterranean to the West Indies without returning first to a home port. However the regions have been set up to minimize inter-regional transfers.

The three regions are:

1. **East Indies and South Atlantic**

   Region 1 covers all destinations outside North Atlantic and European waters and includes the South Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific oceans. Region 1 voyages include the North Atlantic and it should be noted that voyages for all regions (apart from the North Sea and Baltic areas of region 3) can assume to include a North Atlantic passage.

2. **North America, West Indies and West Africa**

   Region 2 covers the entire eastern seaboard of North America from Quebec and Newfoundland to the Cape of Florida. It also includes Bermuda and the Western Atlantic as far east as the Azores. All of the West Indies and the Gulf of Mexico will also be within this region. North America and the West Indies are grouped together to incorporate the frequent traffic between the West Indian islands, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea are also included in this region. In the early 19th century there was no specific Africa Squadron even though Africa was a frequent destination. Almost all vessels sent to West Africa then made their way to Jamaica, via Barbados thus forming a regular shipping link between the two areas. After the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, vessels assigned to West Africa, usually for the suppression of the slave trade, often visited Ascension Island and sometimes St. Helena and Bahia.

3. **Mediterranean and European Waters.**

   As well as the Mediterranean, region 3 includes the European Atlantic seas such as Biscay and the Western Approaches, as well as the English Channel, North Sea

and Baltic. It should be noted that those vessels sent to the Mediterranean might find themselves operating in either the eastern or western Mediterranean, usually the latter and often in the area between Gibraltar, Toulon, or Italy. By the second quarter of the 19th century and certainly from the 1850s onwards, there was more activity in the eastern Mediterranean than hitherto. Vessels attached to the Mediterranean fleet were also likely to be operating in the Atlantic as far north as Lisbon as this was the normal operating limit of the Mediterranean fleet. In the directory, the destination 'Mediterranean' implies an intention to join that fleet and therefore its 'operational area', not necessarily a certainty of sailing within the Mediterranean itself. The directory does not include those vessels attached to the Channel fleet, which in wartime cruised in the Western Approaches and Bay of Biscay, and had an operating limit as far south as Lisbon. The movements of these vessels are far less certain and they were frequently in port, moored in Tor Bay on the southern coast of Britain, or during the French Wars, blockading a French port. The number of these vessels is numerous and their operations often confined to coastal districts rather than open seas. Much of the sea area sailed by the Channel fleet is more efficiently covered by vessels on the outward and return leg of voyages to more distant parts.

4. Arctic and Antarctic

Region 4 covers all vessels directed to very high latitudes in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres. These are vessels ordered to undertake surveys or exploration in these areas. The region also includes vessels operated by the Hudson's Bay Company, sailing during the summer months to the posts and factories within Hudson's Bay. Additionally there are numerous whaling ships, mostly operating from British east coast ports, and sailing towards the whaling grounds off Greenland and the Davis Strait

Within each regional spreadsheet, vessels have been listed in the order that data was obtained for the entries. This is roughly chronological by the date of sailing from a UK port, but a strict chronology can be obtained by sorting the relevant year, month code and day columns. There are examples however, of vessels commissioned abroad, and which either sailed to the UK or remained in their regions. These vessels have been fitted into the chronology within the year their existence was notified to the

Admiralty. Where precise dates of sailing cannot be determined or where there is uncertainty either the month and year is given or just the year.

Ship Lists

Spreadsheet 5 provides a dedicated listing of East India Company ships (presently 1800-1834) The 1,617 entries are arranged first alphabetically and then chronologically within each name set. Spreadsheet 6 gives a listing of vessels whose destination has not yet been determined. It is comprised of the Royal Navy 'Falmouth Packets', and various store ships, troops ships and transports designated as being 'on a particular service'. Once the 'particular service' has been discovered these vessels will be incorporated into the regional sections in future revisions, but for now their names and archive references have been recorded in what amounts to a 'holding area'.

Logbook Availability

Every effort has been made to provide a continuous series of logbooks for each commission or tour of duty. Some of these commissions were extensive and could last five years or longer. There are instances however of gaps in the sets of captains' logbooks and in most instances these have been filled with either a ship's or a master's logbook. The reasons for these gaps are varied. A vessel might spend several months with a lieutenant in temporary command before the appointment of a new captain. Although the lieutenant would have kept a logbook as commanding officer, this logbook may not have survived particularly in the period after 1806 when lieutenants were no longer required to submit their logbooks to the Navy Board. Gaps in the record might also appear if the vessel underwent a period of docking or repair. This usually required a return to an English dockyard, thus terminating the commission. However on distant stations such as the East Indies, the vessel might be docked at Bombay and although the ship continued in commission, there might be a corresponding gap in the logbook record. Of course a logbook may not have survived though fortunately this is very rare. In the case of vessels lost at sea or captured by the enemy, the logbook covering the months immediately before such incidents, are likely to be absent.

Limitations of the Directory

The chief limitation of the directory will be the identification of vessels operating within a confined geographic area at a very specific time for example the

Mediterranean or the Bay of Bengal on a particular day or week. Usually this degree of detailed information can only be determined by a direct inspection of a logbook. The directory has been compiled mainly with reference to the ADM 8 fleet and station lists in the National Archives. These ship lists can only be considered as a guide as the information recorded can be geographically vague (for example East Indies) and was necessarily weeks or even months out of date, owing to the slow nature of communications. Wherever possible, other sources have also been used to refine the information.

Accuracy of the Directory

Wherever possible, the information in the directory has been verified from more than one source. However, the nature of both the data and the sources means that minor errors are to be expected and there may be small differences between the information in the Directory and what was recorded in the logbooks. These errors are not usually significant but the user should be aware of the types of error that can occur and the reason for such errors. Inconsistencies in the original Admiralty ship lists (ADM 8) can occur. These range from simple clerical errors to incorrect, or out of date, information being supplied to the clerks. For example, the slow pace of communications might mean that a change of orders for a vessel might not be notified to the clerks in time, resulting in conflicting information for the same vessel on consecutive months. Additionally, information on sailings could be overlooked or go unrecorded. Where such omissions have been noted, and in the absence of firm information, the year of sailing only has been inserted in the Directory.

The date of sailing for a vessel is also subject to a degree of interpretation. In some examples, ships are recorded as sailing on different days even though they sailed in company. This inconsistency can occur for a number of reasons. First it is not clear if the civil or nautical day was used in recording this information. This will certainly account for differences of one day between the directory and the corresponding logbook. Furthermore, it was possible for a ship to sail and be recorded as leaving port only to return to the port of origin, or some other haven due to stress of weather. The actual date of sailing from the UK as recorded in the logbook would then be different to the date recorded in the Directory. In the early part of the 19th century, many vessels bound for North America would sail from British ports only to assemble

first at Cork, in southern Ireland, before the Atlantic crossing. Wherever possible these vessels have been noted in the Directory as sailing from Cork along with the date of sailing from that port. The information in the Directory does, wherever possible, record the port of departure though in many instances this can only be determined from an inspection of the logbook. It should be noted however that vessels sailing on the same day are not necessarily in company or even sailing from the same port. Vessels in different ports might all benefit from a favourable change of wind direction and sail within the same 24-hour period.

DIRECTORY COLUMN HEADINGS

A. Unique ID number

A number to be allocated at some future point as the directory nears completion. It is intended at present to provide each vessel with a unique ID number. This ID number can then be cross referenced to a separate listing of ship metadata

B. Other Archive

Miscellaneous archive name and reference

C. Scott Polar Research Institute

References to material held by the Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge, England.

D. British Library India Office Records

The archive reference number of a volume containing an East India Company logbook held at the British Library. There are also a handful of records for the early Indian Navy (commanded by British officers).

E. Part Number

The part number or a section within a British Library volume.

F. NMM Reference

The archive reference for a logbook held at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

G. ADM 51

Archive reference for a captain's logbook held in the National Archives at Kew.

H. ADM 52

Archive reference for a master's logbook held in the National Archives at Kew.

I. ADM 53

Archive reference for a ship's logbook held in the National Archives at Kew. The officer of the watch kept the ship's logbook.

J. ADM 54

Archive reference for a miscellaneous logbook held in the National Archives at Kew.

K. ADM 55

Archive reference for a logbook kept on a vessel of exploration, held in the National Archives at Kew.

L. BH1

Archive reference for a logbook kept by officers of the Hudson's Bay Company.

M. Part Number

Where several logbooks from the National Archive are collected under one reference, each logbook has a part number and is kept in a certain order within the set. This order is usually chronological. The user should be aware that on occasion, a previous reader might not have returned the set in the correct order. Most part numbers are not presently entered into the directory and will be added when the relevant logbooks are inspected.

N. Format

Logbooks are presently available in three formats. MS is manuscript. MRF is microfilm. PHT is photocopy. In some instances a microfilm of a logbook may be found in a different archive to the original manuscript copy. Every effort has been made to provide the location of additional microfilm copies where these are known to exist

O. Date Range

The beginning and terminal dates of the logbook or logbooks expressed as month and year

P. Name of Vessel

The ship's name. Repetition of the names of vessels will occur over a long period of time and it should not be assumed that vessels with the same name are in fact the same vessel. No distinction has been made in the Directory between ships of the same name unless they co-existed. This can occur with vessels of the East India Company, whose vessels were chartered. Where two East India Company

ships have the same name each have been suffixed with a number. The number allocated is that used by Farrington in the *Catalogue of East India Company Ships' Journals and Logs 1600-1834.* This allows unambiguous cross-referencing with Farrington's work. The Directory contains no distinction between Royal Navy and East India Company vessels of the same name as the ownership of the vessel is clearly stated. Duplicate naming of Royal Navy vessels was very rare and only likely to occur if a vessel was commissioned abroad.

Q. Number of Guns.

This field is used almost exclusively for ships of the Royal Navy. Before the advent of steam, armour plate and turret guns, the number of guns carried gives an indication of the size and type of vessel. This is a critical piece of information when choosing a logbook, as the type of ship will dictate the duties and movements of the vessel and the range of data available in the corresponding logbook. This is explained more fully in the section 'Using the Directory'.

R. Company

The ownership of the vessel, either Royal Navy or East India Company

S. Region

Regions 1, 2, 3 and 4 as outlined above.

T. Primary Destination.

The first major destination, but not necessarily the first port of call. This destination is stated to give an indication of the extent of the voyage or an indication of its direction if not in the usual sailing tracks. Intermediate ports of call may be numerous, for example Madeira, Tenerife or the Cape, on a voyage to India or China. These intermediate stops are listed under Voyage Details

U. Secondary Destination

The second major destination again used to give a general indication of the extent of the voyage. For example a primary destination might be Bombay followed by a secondary destination of Whampoa in China. Again minor intermediate stops are listed under Voyage Details

V. Month Code

Code for sorting and searching by date.

W. Month

Month sailed from UK. Dates of sailing are subject to the caveats expressed above.

X. Day

Day sailed from UK. Dates of sailing are subject to the caveats expressed above.

Y. Year

Year sailed from UK.

Z. Return Month

Month of return to a UK port where known

AA. Return Year.

Year of return to a UK port where known.

AB. Destination Source

The archive or printed source from which the information on the vessel and its movements has been taken.

AC. Logbook Inspected?

Indicates whether the logbook has been inspected, either to verify the information in the directory or to determine the suitability of the logbook for research or imaging.

AD. Southern Hemisphere

Indicates if the logbook contains data for the Southern Hemisphere. This is indicated by a field entry of '1' otherwise the field is left blank.

AE. Pacific

Indicates if the logbook contains data for the Pacific Ocean. This is most likely to be either the NE and SE Pacific or the seas off China, Australia and New Zealand. An entry of '1' in this field indicates the presence of data for the Pacific, otherwise the field is blank.

AF. Voyage Details

Provides detailed information on the movements of the vessel. This can involve a note of stops at intermediate ports or very general indications of a vessel's location at various times. In almost all instances this information has been derived from sources other than the logbook itself and is for general guidance. Note that this level of detailed information, without consulting the logbook itself, is only available for East India Company ships and a few Royal Navy vessels.

AG. Instrumental Data

Gives a general indication of the availability of instrumental data as per the following number code.

1. Instrumental data is present. This has been determined by direct inspection of the logbook.
2. Instrumental data is likely to be present. This has been determined by previous recording practices, either by the type of vessel (such as an East Indiaman), an officer known to make such observations, or a time period where such recording is common. It is not a certain indication that such data will be found
3. Instrumental data is unlikely to be present. This has been determined by previous recording practice. It is not a certain indication that such data will be absent.

0. No instrumental data. This has been determined by direct inspection of the logbook.

AH. Air Temperature

Indicates that air temperature data is present. 1=Yes, 0=No. This field will remain blank unless the Instrumental Data field (22) contains '1' to indicate that instrumental data is present

AI. Barometric Pressure

Indicates that pressure data is present. 1=Yes, 0=No. This field will remain blank unless the Instrumental Data field (22) contains '1' to indicate that instrumental data is present

AJ. Sea Surface Temperature

Indicates that SST data is present. 1=Yes, 0=No. This field will remain blank unless the Instrumental Data field (22) contains '1' to indicate that instrumental data is present.

AK. Weather Note/Met Log

The number '1' in this field indicates that the notes field (AK) contains references to gales, hurricanes, storm damage, other weather related events or reports of ice. The field exists so that these references can be easily located. The field, when it contains 'M' indicates the existence of a dedicated meteorological logbook or journal.

AL. Cliwoc Reference

The number '1' in this field indicates that the entry contains some reference to the CLIWOC project, usually an indication that a logbook was inspected, processed or part processed by the Project.

AM. Notes

This section is for general notes or remarks that do not come under the other headings. Included will be any indication that the vessel experienced severe weather such as a hurricane, or that something of particular note is recorded such as a passage through the Gulf Stream or the sighting of sea ice.

USING THE DIRECTORY

The way in which the Logbook directory is used, either in a text or database form will depend upon the requirements and priorities of the enquirer. If instrumental data is absolutely necessary, a search for all voyages designated '1' or '2' in the instrumental field will be required. If long runs of data are required, with no regional bias, then a search should be made for vessels sailing to the East Indies and China (region 1). Data for the North Atlantic can be drawn primarily from vessels making trans-Atlantic voyages (region 2) and those ships sailing to cross the Equator (region 1) as well as those ships sailing the eastern Atlantic towards the Mediterranean (region 3).

Seasonal Factors

It should be noted that there was frequently a seasonal bias in sailings from the UK. Vessels bound to the East Indies could sail at any time of year if they wished but tended to depart in clusters during the northern winter months and again in the early and late spring. This was to take advantage of the seasonal movements of the trade wind belts in the tropical Atlantic, the variation in the width of the doldrums, and to catch the SW monsoon in the Indian Ocean. Equally vessels departing from the East would sail during the winter months when favoured by the NE monsoon, and arrive back in European waters during the summer months. The summer months were most favoured for voyages to Quebec and Newfoundland by ships of the Royal Navy if operational necessity did not dictate otherwise. The North American Squadron, based at Halifax, would retire to Bermuda or the Leeward islands during the winter months. Equally the West Indies and Bermuda would see a reduction of shipping movements during the hurricane months of July to October. Even taking these considerations into account it would be unusual not to find vessels traversing the oceans during all months of the year. The possible exception is the South Atlantic where it is often difficult to find British (and Dutch) shipping movements during November and December due to the seasonal sailing patterns. The preceding remarks pertain for the

most part to the early 19th century and earlier periods. With the advent of steam and the opening of the Suez and Panama Canals, sailing patterns and routes begin to conform to 20th century experience.

Selection of Vessel

The most critical decision in the selection of logbooks for research, assuming a need for long runs of data (or equally, frequent but shorter runs of data), is first the selection of the vessel itself and secondly the sailing route. This is particularly important if large amounts of data are to be collected as this provides a method for prioritising the selection of vessels and logbooks.

Type of Vessel

When selecting a Royal Navy logbook, it is always best, when a choice is available, to select particular types of vessel. Medium sized and smaller ships are the most likely to be active and therefore their logbooks will contain more sea time and more useful weather data. Early 19th century, Royal Navy vessels can be grouped into three main categories. The largest vessels, ships of the line, carried between 64 and 120 guns. The medium sized vessels, frigates, carried between 32 and 50 guns. Smaller vessels, such as small frigates, sloops, brigs, cutters and schooners carried between 6 and 28 guns. There were other vessels that did not fall into a gun type of classification. These were store ships and troop ships made up of hired merchant ships or vessels especially converted from regular navy ships for these special duties. The nature of their activities makes them particularly attractive for selection as outlined below.

Large Vessels

The larger ships of 64 to 120 guns will provide perfectly adequate logbook data in the absence of a smaller vessel, particularly if making a long multi-ocean voyage. Captains of these vessels were often senior in rank and kept good records. The chief disadvantage of the larger vessel is not the quality of data but the quantity and extent of data to be expected. Ships of the line tended to be sent to a station where they would remain near a port until called upon to engage enemy units of a similar size. Otherwise they might be used to blockade French or Spanish ports. Once one of these larger vessels reached its station it did not tend to move very far unless an enemy was at sea. Therefore the geographic extent of data is likely to be limited and if in a port

such as Port Royal, Jamaica or Halifax, the quality of marine data will either be poor or compromised by the proximity of the land. On the other hand, a vessel of this type, on blockade duty for long periods of time, can give reasonably long runs of data in a very confined area, for example off Toulon or Cadiz during the French Wars of the 18th and early 19th centuries. During times of peace almost all of this type of vessel remained in home ports due to the considerable running costs they incurred.

Medium and Small Vessels

Frigates of 50 to 32 guns will often provide long extended runs of data. Unlike larger ships, these vessels would cruise once reaching their designated station as well as carry communications between ports or dispersed squadrons. Cruising might involve searching for hostile fleets and warships, intercepting enemy shipping, or making a rendezvous with merchant fleets to provide escort. Equally, the smaller sloops, brigs and schooners would perform much the same set of functions. Medium and small ships are more likely to provide logbooks containing large runs of data recorded at sea over a wide geographic area.

Store Ships and Troop Ships

This is a class of vessel that might easily be overlooked. They were either hired merchant vessels or more usually older warships especially fitted to carry out special duties. Naval officers almost always commanded them. The chief advantage to selecting the logbook of this type of vessel is the long runs of data to expect in any part of the world. At various times there were regular sailings of store ships to destinations as diverse as the Mediterranean, St. Helena and the Falkland Islands and as far distant as Port Jackson and Botany Bay in Australia. Store ships usually made a fast passage, unloaded, made an immediate return to Britain, loaded and made their way to sea again. Even store ships sent to replenish a fleet rather than a far-flung outpost would be very active. It would be typical for a store ship sent to the Mediterranean to rendezvous with the main fleet and then be sent onwards to replenish smaller squadrons and individual vessels cruising on that station. Likewise, troopships having discharged their men would be likely to return home for more or be directed to carry various supplies and equipment to some other location. The logbook of a vessel carrying out these specific duties will provide long runs of excellent data. This is especially so for the period after about 1860. With many more commitments

in the East Indies and Far East, and with the opening of the Suez Canal, it became increasingly common for Royal Navy ships to spend long periods on station, hardly ever returning to Britain, being repaired, refitted and replenished abroad. Fresh crews would be sent out in troopships after which they would then bring the original crews home. Furthermore there was a dedicated Royal Navy India Transport Service that plied between Bombay and Portsmouth via Suez. These various vessels were constantly on the move.

East India Company Ships

There is no distinction in the size or type of EIC ship that needs to be taken into account when selecting a logbook although these vessels could range between 400 and 1,200 tons in measurement.

Destination and Voyage Details

The destination and voyage details can further refine the selection of a vessel and its logbook. If long runs of multi-ocean data are required then a vessel with primary and secondary destinations of Madras and China is to be preferred to one that sails only to Madras and returns. The voyage details provide an opportunity for further refinement indicating other stops and routes. This is particularly relevant to the East India Company ships. Furthermore extended runs of data can be expected from the logbooks of any vessels sailing to the Indian Ocean and stopping at Rio de Janeiro or St. Helena en route. Both of these ports are not in the common outward-bound sailing tracks to the East Indies and therefore indicate extended sea time recorded in the logbook. Outward-bound vessels stopping at St. Helena are an attractive option as the route to the island usually involved sailing deep into the South Atlantic and using the southern circulation to approach the island from the southeast rather than from the north. These vessels would often then sail on to India. The chief advantage of using logbooks with out-bound stops at St. Helena is the additional data for the South Atlantic as well as a longer run of data generally. Logbooks can also be short-listed on the basis of regionally specific data requirements. Vessels sailing to the Red Sea, Aden or Bombay will cover the waters off East Africa, the Mozambique Channel and the Arabian Gulf. Vessels sailing to Calcutta or Kedgeree will provide data for the Bay of Bengal. Data for the tropical Atlantic will be found in logbooks of vessel sailing south to cross the Equator, and those sailing to Barbados, Jamaica or West

Africa. Reports of sea ice are more likely to be found in the logbooks of vessels sailing to Hudson's Bay, Quebec and Halifax. Outside of ships on exploration at high latitudes, sea ice was occasionally encountered by ships passing well to the south of the Cape of Good Hope, especially if their intention was to steer to the southward of Australia.

Linking Data within the Directory

As a searchable database the directory will enable the enquirer to make quite detailed interrogation of the data, such as searching for all outbound vessels stopping at St. Helena or all vessels bound to Jamaica via West Africa. Certain other enquiries can be made. Some of the ships in the directory made fairly short and frequent voyages for instance to Lisbon, the Mediterranean or Newfoundland. By searching the names of such vessels the user will be able to build up a picture of the ship's movements by the number and frequency of the voyages made, and also determine how many such voyages are contained within a particular logbook. A further useful search can be made through the archive reference fields if large numbers of logbooks are likely to be processed. Many manuscript sets contain more than one logbook and it will be possible to assemble an indication of which logbooks are grouped together. This way two or more different logbooks can be ordered and processed at the same time, instead of at different times, avoiding the re-ordering of the same set and double handling of the contents.